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C O N F I D E N T I A L PRAGUE 000143

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STATE FOR NCE/EUR

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [UN](#) [CU](#) [EZ](#)

SUBJECT: CUBA STRIKES BACK: CZECH NGO DENIED ECOSOC
CONSULTATIVE STATUS

Classified By: A/DCM Michael Dodman for reasons 1.4 b+d.

¶1. (C) Summary. Czech NGO People in Need (PIN) was recently denied ECOSOC consultative status because of strong Cuban opposition. According to a PIN representative, the denial will have no impact on PIN democracy promotion activities in Cuba or elsewhere. End summary.

¶2. (SBU) Poloff met Ivana Grollova, from the Czech MFA's UN Department, February 7 to discuss the role Cuba played in the January 24, 2006 denial of ECOSOC consultative status to PIN. Poloff also discussed the matter with PIN representative Meghan King February 6.

¶3. (C) The ECOSOC's Committee on NGOs voted in favor of a Cuban proposal to reject PIN's application for consultative status. According to press reports, the Cuban Ambassador to the UN Rodrigo Malmierca called the denial, "An important victory for our people." The ECOSOC official announcement of the decision states the Cuban proposal accused PIN of being a "front for the Czech government" that is used to "destabilize and promote changes in regimes in different countries," including Cuba. The Cuban proposal also linked PIN to the USG, via alleged funding from the State Department and USAID. Grollova explained the allegations linking PIN to the GOCR were based on the fact that Czech MFA Deputy FM Tomas Pojar previously served as PIN's Executive Director. Grollova added that the Cubans also accused PIN of "supporting terrorists" in Cuba.

¶5. (C) Grollova said there were a few surprises among the Committee's votes: namely, Chile and Turkey abstained. Grollova said these countries have supported PIN in the past. Reliable supporters were France, Germany, Romania, and the U.S. The Czech Republic attended as an observer, and spoke in support of PIN.

¶6. (C) PIN Representative Meghan King said PIN was not surprised or distressed by the denial of ECOSOC consultative status, which she claimed will have no impact on PIN's democracy promotion or humanitarian activities.

¶7. (C) Grollova said the GOCR wished to thank the U.S. delegation for its efforts to defend PIN's application, even when it seemed certain to be denied.

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